

# HAYMAN RECOVERY

Pike and San Isabel National Forests  
Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands  
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## Hayman Burn: Life Support To Restorative Therapy

With our fire season behind us and fall drawing to a close, we want to thank the many individuals and organizations who gave extensively of themselves as volunteers offering direct assistance to the emergency rehabilitation of the Hayman Fire and associated impacted private lands. More than 6,000 hours of volunteer contributions were tracked by the Coalition for the Upper South Platte, a non-profit organization established to address short- and long-term watershed restoration. Our heartfelt thanks...

Like life support in the hospital emergency room, following a devastating wildfire such as the Hayman Fire, a Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) team was dispatched to the burn area. Emergency treatments performed by BAER (see article, "It's A Great Green Scene") serve as restorative therapy. And those enacted as part of the Hayman Fire/BAER add up to the largest single such operation in Forest Service history, this because of the critical values at risk.

No different than the emergency room patient once released from the hospital, our long-term work towards restorative activities now begins. Over the next several years a team of specialists will concentrate on restoration activities.

Over the winter months ahead, community meetings will be held throughout the Pike National Forest in order to engage communities in these restoration plans and to discuss the need to sustain and increase past efforts in reducing overloaded fuel conditions on both public and private land. We look forward to working as part of our many communities, addressing the work ahead of each of us in reducing risks of wildland fires.

Joe Meade, Acting Forest Supervisor  
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Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands

## Help Continues for Private Landowners

Wildfires know no bounds. When catastrophic burns such as the Hayman fire occur, there is a need for cooperation on the part of several entities to treat both private and public lands that will affect each other when the rains come. This usually involves a joint effort on the part of the USDA/Forest Service, the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), county offices, soil and water conservation districts, and private citizens.

Shortly after the Hayman Fire was controlled in July, specialists from the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) team began contacting private landowners in and around the burn area to assess potential risks to their property from adjacent National Forest lands.

Many treatments have been performed on public lands by the BAER team since then to minimize impacts on private property. These measures include hazard tree removal, log erosion control barriers, check dams, sandbag retaining walls, and the application of seed, straw and hydro-mulch.

Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP), a non-profit watershed protection group, began working with BAER to coordinate phone calls from landowners requesting assistance on and around their private property. CUSP further worked to organize volunteer workdays for these projects.

According to policy, the USDA-Forest Service is empowered to work on public lands, and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) oversees projects on private lands. However, thanks to legislation from U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), the Wyden Amendment allows entities from all levels to enter into collaborative agreements and cross funding lines to effectively serve the public good.

Federal, county and local entities have been able to jointly help private property owners under the potential flood emergency conditions posed from the Hayman burn area until Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) funding requested by NRCS was released by Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The EWP program is designed to protect lives and property threatened by natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and wildfires.

All along, BAER has been sharing information with NRCS, who is now using the EWP funds recently made available to begin their landowner assistance program and implement plans for flood mitigation, erosion control, and watershed protection on private lands.

NRCS personnel began meeting with landowners in early October to determine what needs to be done on their property and the funding available for the projects under the EWP program. These private property owners sign contracts with designated sponsors that will allow them to receive EWP funds.

NRCS provides up to 75% of the funding needed for burn area treatments, such as clearing debris from clogged waterways, minimizing erosion and flooding, bringing back vegetation, and restoring the natural function of a watershed on private land. This money is made available through the local sponsor. The private individual then pays the remaining 25%, which can be paid for in cash or in-kind services.

There are five local sponsors for landowners affected by the Hayman burn. Denver Water Board will be working to treat their property within the burn area. Douglas Conservation District will be sponsoring State lands that were affected. Douglas County will be working with private individuals in Douglas County. Jefferson Conservation District will be working with individuals in Jefferson County. And Teller-Park Soil Conservation District will assist affected residents in Teller and Park Counties.

EWP work must be completed within 220 days from the time the contract between the landowner and their sponsor is signed. Under this timeline, private land treatments around the Hayman fire area treated under this EWP program should be completed around April 2003.

For more information, please contact the Teller-Park Soil Conservation District office at 719-686-9405 or Petra Barnes at 720-544-2808 in Denver.

### FIRE CLOSURE ORDER EXTENDED

Your understanding and cooperation with regard to this closure are greatly appreciated. The Closure will be lifted as soon as conditions allow.

The Fire Closure Order on all lands affected by the Hayman Fire in the Pike National Forest administered by the USDA-Forest Service and located in Douglas, Jefferson, Park, Teller and El Paso Counties in the state of Colorado has been extended through January 15, 2003.

This closure is being implemented for the protection of public health and safety due to the extreme hazard conditions in the Hayman Fire area.

## Focus Remains Safety First and Always

The Hayman and Schoonover fires burned thousands of acres, leaving behind a huge swath of dead and dying trees in their paths. These trees fall easily because their structures are weakened, and they pose a hazard to people walking or driving near them. We would all like for the burn areas to be re-opened, but it is the duty of the USDA-Forest Service to make sure it is safe for forest visitors and personnel to come back in.

Immediately following the fire, many hazard trees that posed an imminent threat along roads, adjacent to private property or near public-use areas were felled by the BAER team. The ongoing Burned Area Restoration Team, which will monitor measures to restore the burn area over the next three to five years, has now taken over the hazard tree removal project.

The Restoration Team will coordinate the removal of trees within the burn area on several different fronts. First, they are working to complete the National Environmental Policy Act requirements in order to enter into timber sale and salvage timber contracts.

The contract for the timber sale should be awarded in fall of 2002 and completion of the majority of the project is expected in the summer and fall of 2003. Trees for this sale will come from severely burned areas along roads and in public/private interface areas.

The salvage timber contract will take place "in the black" in order to take dead but marketable timber out of the entire burn area, and turn it into viable wood and lumber products. The goal here is to realize as much of the board value of the burned

timber as possible by selling it to area mills before insect infestation takes over.

Then, over the next five years or so, Forest Service crews and service contractors will be removing the hazard trees that did not qualify for timber or salvage contracts. Hazard tree work will be done within the Hayman and Schoonover burn areas, along roads, trails, and areas that adjoin private lands. About 250 miles of roads and trails will be evaluated. Hazard trees within 100 feet of a road, trail, or residential boundary may be felled.

Most of these felled hazard trees will be left where they are cut, serving for erosion control and wildlife habitat. Some of the dropped trees will provide habitat for the endangered Preble's jumping mouse.

Partly damaged trees in all hazard areas will be inspected; if they meet survival criteria they will not be cut. Ponderosa pine can usually survive if 25% of the canopy is still green and the root system are not compromised; Douglas fir can usually survive only a 50% burn.

The Hayman and Schoonover fires may be over, but the burned areas are still dangerous. We sincerely appreciate your patience and understanding during our efforts to bring safety and life back to your public lands.

For information about hazard tree removal or the resulting timber products, you may call CUSP at (800) 420-9110 or PSICC at 719-553-1400.



Hazard trees are being removed along 250 miles of roads and trails within the Hayman.

## The Hunt Is On

The Colorado Division of Wildlife **Big Game Season Outlook** states that a good fall hunt is expected. DOW maintains that despite the devastating 2002 fire season, very few of Colorado's big game units actually suffered fire damage and the fires have had little impact on big game populations statewide.

The Hayman Fire only affected parts of two adjacent Game Management Units (GMU), 501 and 511. Bob Davies, the terrestrial biologist for the DOW in Colorado Springs, estimates that only 60 percent of the game management units within the fire boundaries actually burned. This constitutes only a small portion of the game units as a whole.

According to the DOW website, Mark Lamb, wildlife manager for the South Park/Fairplay DOW district, said he knows of only two herds of elk that were caught in the Hayman Fire, with 20 to 30 animals per herd that didn't escape the fire. And, although ground-dwelling small animals, nesting birds and small numbers of elk and deer (a tiny percentage of Colorado's overall populations) were lost, the fires will create a more healthy ecosystem of meadows, saplings and other feed for big game animals.

The Division would like for hunters who are concerned about Forest closure areas to know that CDOW has an extremely liberal policy on refunding license fees. Anyone can request a refund for any reason before the opening day of any season.

For more information about roads and areas that are open for recreation and hunting, check out the Forest Service site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/fire/hayman/closures.htm>. Or for specific hunting information, you may access the Colorado Division of Wildlife website at [http://wildlife.state.co.us/fire\\_info/index.asp](http://wildlife.state.co.us/fire_info/index.asp).

FIRE	GMU	BURN AREA (SQ. KM)	AREA OF GMU (SQ KM)	% BURNED
HAYMAN FIRE	50	0.97	1295	0.07
	51	1753.48	1302	13.48
	501	233.27	1298	17.97
	511	192.13	936	20.53

## Thank You Lake George Residents

The Forest Service extends a sincere thank you to the Community of Lake George for their cooperation and hospitality during the Hayman Fire. The Hayman Fire Incident Command Post (ICP) was set up at Lake George Community Park in June, shortly after the start of the fire.

The patience and understanding shown by area residents as to the magnitude of demobilizing a fire camp the size of that which was required to handle the Hayman Fire is sincerely appreciated.

As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, the Hayman BAER Team moved all operations from the Lake George fire camp to office space in Woodland Park. The rehabilitation work for the Park and surrounding areas used for the ICP will be completed by the end of October.

As part of the rehabilitation needed at the former fire camp, the Lake George Community Park

(LGCP) has been raked and seeded with a mix of annual grasses designed to germinate quickly, then give way for the return of native grasses. Additional seed is being spread on approx. 70 acres surrounding the Park. Straw mulch is being spread to cover this seed, stabilize the soil and aid in seed germination.

Areas adjacent to LGCP used as ICP parking areas and for fuel staging and equipment have been "ripped" or graded with a dozer, seeded and covered with straw. A nice cover of green grass is already taking over the areas that were treated in September.

Wood mulch from the surrounding community has been spread adjacent to the pavilion at the Park. Weeds will be sprayed in the area as needed.

A grader and roller have been used to recondition the roads leading from Hwy. 24 into the Hayman ICP, as well as the roads used within the park. Gravel has been applied to these roads as well, to prevent pot-holes and degradation in the future.

Three basketball hoop nets and a new light fixture have been installed in the Park pavilion. The existing restroom facilities at Lake George Community Park have also been cleaned and restored.



## It's A Great Green Scene

There is considerable new growth within the Hayman burn area! Thanks to the immediate response from the Forest Service and the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) team, along with some help from Mother Nature, the seeding and mulching program on the burn area is working well. This renewed vegetative cover will provide stability for the soil and minimize erosion.

Before the Hayman Fire was even controlled, a BAER team was sent to the area. The Hayman BAER team consisted of professional hydrologists, soil scientists, engineers, biologists, and other resource specialists. They assessed damage to the land, flood danger, and determined human health and safety conditions. The team designed a plan to ease emergency conditions by stabilizing soil, controlling water flow, minimizing runoff, and protecting the ecosystem and watershed. Hayman BAER treatments were aimed at promptly reestablishing some of the ground cover lost in the fire in the face of the ensuing monsoon season. BAER teams have achieved this through both aerial and ground operations.

Often, soils in the high-intensity burn areas become water-repellent, which greatly heightens flood and erosion potentials. In order for grass to grow and ground cover to return, these soils are broken up by scarification, or raking, and seeded.

As part of the BAER effort, scarification and seeding on 13,800 acres has been completed by hand and ATV crews. An annual rye seed mix was used, which is designed to germinate quickly to provide ground cover, then die in within a couple of years allowing native grasses to return.

Hydro-mulch (a mix of recycled wood fiber, grass seed, water and a binding agent) was applied by truck to 1,500 acres along Forest roads and county



**Aspen began sprouting soon after the fire.**

and state highways. The hydro-mulch was sprayed 300 feet on either side of the designated roads to generate growth that will significantly reduce runoff, erosion and damage to the roads.

Culverts and stream crossings within the burn area were cleaned and reinforced. Over 27 miles of Forest roads in the area have been graded and reconditioned, and drainages along Forest roads 211 and 560 have been reestablished. A total of 151 concrete barrier reinforcements have been placed to prevent road washout at water crossings and significant drainages. Road engineers and crews have installed 115 armored road dips as well as 700 yards of rip-rap (rocks wrapped in steel mesh) along the banks of the roads to direct water flow and minimize erosion damage.

Treatment of noxious weeds (such as Canada thistle, yellow toad flax and knapweed) was completed on 340 acres within and adjacent to the burn area. And remote area weather stations were installed in and around the fire area to help with early detection of rainfall for public evacuation and emergency warnings, if needed.

BAER aerial operations involved the application of hydro-mulch by helicopter to 1,593 acres of heavily burned slope. An annual grass seed mix was also applied using fixed wing aircraft to 19,835 acres within severe burn areas.

Finally, dry straw was dropped via helicopter on just over 7,700 acres that had previously been seeded. The straw helps to minimize erosion during rains, and provides shade and moisture for quicker seed germination. With the exception of road work within the burn area, all emergency rehabilitation treatments have paused due to the end of the rainy season and onset of winter. The Burned Area Restoration Team will assess the area and formulate a plan for future treatments within the Hayman burn area over the next three to five years.



## Forest Service Teams With CUSP To Assist Landowners

The Forest Service and the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) have distributed 810 bags of seed and 6,000 bales or 20,250 lbs. of straw to assist private landowners affected by the Hayman fire. Private property owners with land that sustained severe burn were eligible to receive the seed and straw.

The Forest Service Hayman Recovery Assistance Program (HayRAC) was replaced by the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) for the coordination of private landowner assistance during the Hayman emergency rehabilitation. CUSP joined the effort to respond to phone calls from landowners, coordinate seed and straw deliveries and distribution for private land treatments, and organize volunteer projects to this end.

Volunteer workdays have focused on raking, seeding and applying straw mulch to the burned ground. Several projects also involved filling sandbags and placing them to create retaining walls to protect homes in the flow of drainages.

CUSP has hosted more than 40 volunteer events since early August, equaling about 6,000 volunteer hours! These volunteer groups have included students, private citizens, and employee groups from Toyota, REI, Peterson Air Force Base, AT&T Broadband, Colorado College, Coors, Air Force Academy, Combined Federal Campaign, EDS, and Nexus-Lexus.

The volunteer projects will wrap up for this year in mid-November, and start again next spring. The Forest Service Burned Area Restoration Team, charged with ongoing restoration within the Hayman burn, will work with CUSP to assess the needs and goals for future projects.

CUSP education programs concerning fire and forest issues will continue. Community groups and schools may contact CUSP at (800) 420-9110 for more information.

## A Virtual Learning Curriculum

The following link is a virtual tour of the Hayman Fire, including online research opportunities following the links provided. Some of the linked sites are "edu's" provided by research institutions, and are highly technical, but they are a good challenge students and contain the most recent and accurate information on the subject.

The exercises are self-paced and each site provides further opportunities to pursue a subject as far as a reader or explorer has interest.

Although the best way to learn about the grandeur and tyranny of a fire, is to walk through it, not everyone will have that opportunity. Many of the areas of the Hayman Fire are still very dangerous and are closed to the public until January 15, 2003. This online curriculum can provide preparatory classroom research for future field trip opportunities.



*Caring for the Land  
and Serving People*

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